O helpe him sir, saied he. sens ye easily maie.
Shamfull crauyng (q he) must haue shamfull naie.
Ye maie syr (q he) mend thre naies with one ye.
Two fals knaues nede no broker, men saie (saied he)
Some saie also: It is mery whan knaues mete.
But the mo knaues the worse companie to grete.
The one knaue now crouchith. while thother crauith
But to shew what shall be his releuauith.
Either after my death if my wyll be kept,
Or duryng my life, had I this hall hept
With golde, he maie his parte on good frydaie eate,
And fast neuer the wurs, for ought he shall geate.
These former lessons conde, take forth this, sonne.
Tell thy cardes, & than tell me what thou hast wonne.
Nowe here is the doore, and there is the wey.
And so (q he) farewell gentill Geffrey.
Thus parted I from hym, beyng muche dismaied,
Whiche his man saw, and (to comfort me) saied.
What man, plucke vp your herte, be of good chere.
After cloud blacke, we shall haue wether clere.
What should your face thus agayn the woll be shorne
For one fall? What man al this wind shak no corne.
Let this wynde ouerblow. a tyme I will spy,
To take wynde and tyde with me, and spede therby.
I thanke you (q I) but great boste and small roste,
Maketh vnsauory mouthes, where euer men oste.
And this boste veraie vnsauourly serueth.
For while the grasse groweth, the horse sterueth.
Better one byrde in hande than ten in the wood.
Rome was not built on a daie (q he) and yet stood

Tyll it was kniȝht, as some say, full faire.
Your hert is in your hose all in dispaire.
But as euery man saith, a dog hath a day.
Should you a man, dispaire than any daie ? nay.
Ye haue many stryng{ to the bowe. for ye know,
Though I, hauyng the bent of your vncles bow,
Can no way bryng your bolt in the butte to stand,
Yet haue ye other mark{ to roue at, at hande.
The kays hang not all by one mans girdell man.
Though nought wilbe woon here, I say, yet ye can
Taste other kynsmen, of whom ye may geat,
Here some and there some, many small make a great.
For come light winnyngs with blessyng{ or curses,
Euermoze light gaynes make heuy purses.
Children lerne to crepe er they can lerne to go.
And little and little, ye must lerne euen so.
Throwe no gift againe at the giuers head,
For better is halfe a loke than no bread.
I maie beg my bread (q I) for my kyn all,
That dwelth ny. Well, yet (q he) and the worst fall,
Ye maie to your kynsman, hens nine or ten mile,
Rich without charge, whom ye saw not of long while.
That vnchwhitster (q I) is a pinchepeny.
As fre of gyft, as a pooze man of his eye.
I shall get a fart of a dead may ~s soone
As a farthyng of hym, his dole is soone doone.
He is so hye in tyntlep, and so streight laste,
That pride and couetise withdrawth all repaste.
Ye knowe what he hath ben (q he) but ywis,
Absence saith plainly, ye know not what he is.

When

Men know (q I) I haue heard now and then,
How the market goth by the market men.
Further it is saied, who that saiyng weyth,
It must nedes be true, that euery man seyth.
Men saie also, children and fooles can not ly.
And both man and child saieth, he is a heinsoy.
And my self knowth hym, I dare boldly brag,
Euen as well as the begger knowth his bag.
And I knew hym, not worth a good grey grote.
He was at an ebbe, though he be nowe a flote,
Poore as the poorest. And now nought he setteth
By poore folke. For the parishe priest forgetteth,
That euer he hath been holy water clerke.
By ought I can now here, or euer could marke.
Of no man hath he pitie, or compassion,
Well (q he) euery man after his fassion.
He maie yet pitie you, for ought both apperr,
It hapth in one houre, that hapth not in. vii. yere.
For spende not your fortune, nor hide not your nede.
Nought beter nought haue, spare to spek spare to spede
Unknowne unkyst. it is lost that is unsought.
As good seeke nought (q I) as seke and find nought.
It is (q he) ill fishyng before the net.
But though we get little, dere bought and far fet
Are deinties for Ladies. Go we both too,
I haue for my maister thereby to doo.
I maie breake a dishe there. and sure I shall
Set all at fire and seuen, to wyn some wyndfall.
And I will hang the bell about the cats necke.
For I will first breake, and ieobard the first checke.

And for to win this praie, though the coſte be myne,
Leat vs preſent him with a bottell of wyne.
What ſhould we (q̄ he) greaſe the fat ſow in thars,
We maie do muche yll, er we do much wars.
It is, to geue hym, as much almeſſe or nede,
As caſt water in tems, or as good a dede,
As it is to helpe a dogge ouer a ſtyle.
Than go we (q̄ he) we leſe tyme all this whyle.
To folowe his fanſy, we went together.
And toward night yeſternight when we came thither,
She was within, but he was yet abrode.
And ſtreight as ſhe ſawe me, ſhe ſwelde lyke a tode.
Pattryng the diuels Pater noſter to her ſelfe.
God neuer made a more croked crabbed elfe.
She bad hym welcome, but the wors for me.
This knaue comth abeggyng, by me thought ſhe.
I ſmelde her out, and had her ſtreight in the wynde.
She maie abyde no beggers of any kynde.
They be bothe gredy guts all geuen to get,
They care not how. all is fyſhe that comth to net.
They know no ende of their good, nor begynnyng
Of any goodneſſe. ſuche is wretched wynnyng.
Hunger dropeth euen out of bothe their noſes.
She goth with broken ſhone and torne hoſes.
But who is wurs ſhod, than the ſhoemakers wyfe,
With ſhops full of newe ſhapen ſhoes all her lyfe?
Or who will do leſſe, than they that may do moſte?
And namely of her I can no waie make boſte.
She is one of theim, to whom God bad who.
She will all haue, and will right nought forgo.

She will not part with the paryng of her nayles,
She toyleth continually for anayles.
Whiche life she hath so long now kept in vre,
That for no life she wolde make chaunge, be sure.
But this lesson lernde I, er I was yeres seuen,
Thei that be in hell, wene there is none other heuen.
She is nothyng kayre, but she is yll fauourd.
And no more vnklenly, than vnswete sauourd.
But hakney men sate, at mangy hakneis hyer,
A scald hors is good inough for a scabde squyer.
He is a knuckylbonyard verate meete
To matche a mynion nother kayre nor sweete.
He winkth with the tone eie, and lokth with ȳ tother
I will not trust hym though he were my brother.
He hath a poyson wyt, and all his delite,
To geue tauntes and checkes of most spitefull spite.
In that house commonly suche is the cast,
A man shall as soone breake his necke as his fast.
And yet nowe suche a gyd did her head take,
That more for my mates than for maner sake,
We had breade and drynke, and a chese very greate.
But the greatest crabs be not all the best meate.
For her crabbed cheese, with all the greatnesse,
Myght well abyde the fineuesse, or sweatnesse.
Anon he cam in. And whan he vs sawe,
To my companion kyndlie he dyd drawe.
And a welfauourd welcom to hym he yeldȝ.
Byddyng me welcom strangely ouer the feeldȝ.
With theseworldȝ. Ah yong mā I know your matter,
By my faith you come to loke in my water.

And for my comfort to your conſolacion,
Ye would, by my purs, geue me a purgacion.
But I am laxatiue inough there otherwyſe.
This caſe (q thys yonge man) contrary doth eyſe.
For he is purs ſicke, and lacketh a phyſicion,
And hopeth vpon you in ſome condicion.
Not by purgacion, but by reſtoratiue.
To ſtrength his weakneſſe to kepe hym aliue.
I can not (q he) for though it be my lot
To haue ſpeculacion, yet I practiſe not.
I ſee muche, but I ſay little, and do leſſe.
In this kynd of phiſike. and what would ye geſſe.
Shall I conſume my ſelfe, to reſtore hym now?
Nay, backare (q mortimer to his fow)
He can before this tyme, no tyme aſſyne,
In whiche he hath laied downe one peny by myne,
That euer might eyther make me bite or ſup.
And by lady frend, nought ley doune, nought take vp.
Ka me, ka the, one good tourne aſkth an other.
Nought won by the tone, nought won by the tother.
To put me to coſte, thou canſt halfe a ſcore myles,
Out of thyne owu neſt, ſeke me in theſe out yles.
Where thou wilt not ſtep ouer a ſtraw, I thynke,
To wyn me the worth of one draught of drynke.
No more than I haue wonne of all thy holle ſtocke.
I haue been common Iacke to all that hole ſtocke.
When ought was to doo, I was common hackney,
Folke call on the hors that will carry alwey.
But euermore the common horſe is worſte ſhod.
Deſert and reward be oft tymes thyng far od,

At

At end I myght put my winnyng in mine eye,
And see neuer the worse, for ought I wan them by.
And nowe without theim, I liue here at staues end.
Where I nede not borowe, nor I will not lend.
It is good to beware by other mens harmes,
But thy takyng of thine aulter in thyne armes.
Teachyth other to beware of their harmes by thine.
Thou hast striken the ball, vnder the line.
I praie you (q I) pitie me a poore man,
With somwhat, tyll I maie worke as I can.
Toward your work (q he) ye make such taskyngs
As approue you to be none of the haskyngs.
Ye ren to worke in hast as nine men helde ye.
But whan so euer ye to worke must yelde ye.
If your mete mate and you mete together,
Than shall we see two men beare a tether.
Recompensyng former loytryng lyke loose,
As dyd the pure penitent that slaie a goose,
And stak downe a fether. And where old folke tell.
That euill gotten good neuer prouety well.
Ye, wyll truely get, and true getyng well kepe
Till tyme ye be as riche as a new shorne shepe.
Howe be it whan thryft and you fell first at a fray,
You played the man, for ye made thrift ren away.
So helpe me god, in my poore opinion,
A man might make a plaie of this minion.
And fain no ground, but take tales of his own freuds.
I sucke not this out of my owne fingers ends.
And sens ye were wed, although I nought gaue you,
Yet praie I for you, God and seint Luke saue you.

And here is all. For what shuld I further wade?
I was neither of court nor of counsayle made.
And it is, as I haue learned in listnyng,
A poore dogge, that is not worth the whistlyng.
I dare er I was wedde, I bad you (ye I)
Scarbrough warnyng I had (quoth he) wherby,
I kept me thens, to serue the accordyng.
And nowe, if this nightes lodgeyng and bordyng
Mare ease the, and eyd me from any more charge,
Than welcome. or els get the streight at large,
For of further rewarde, marke how I bost me,
In case as ye shall yeld me as ye cost me,
So shall ye cost me as ye yelde me likewyse.
Whiche is, a thyng of nought rightly to surmyse.
Here withall his wyfe to make vp my mouthe,
Not onely her husbandes iauntyng tale auouthe,
But therto deuiseth to cast in my teeth,
Checks and chokyng oysters. And whan she seeth
Her tyme to take vp, to shew my face at best,
Ye se your fare (saied she) set your hert at rest.
Fare ye well (quoth I) how euer I fare now.
And well mote ye fare bothe whan I dyne with yow.
Come, go we hens friend (quoth I to my mate)
And now will I make a crosse on this gate.
And I (quoth he) crosse the quite out of my booke.
Scus thou art crosse sayde, auale vnhappy hooke.
By hoke or croke nought could I wyn there, men saie,
He that comth euery date, shall haue a cockpate.
He that comth now and then, shall haue a fat hen.
But I gat not so muche in comyng seelde when,

As

As a good hens ferher, or a poore egshell.
As good play for nought as work for nought, folk tel.
Well well (q he) we be but where we were.
Come what come wold, I thought er we came there,
That yf the worst fell, we could haue but a nate,
There is no harme doone man in all this frate.
Neither pot broken, nor yet water spylt.
Farewell he (quoth I) I will as sone be hylt,
As wayte agatu for the moneshyne in the water.
But is not this a praty pyked mater?
To disdeigne me, who muck of the world hordth not,
As he doth, it mate tyme but it accordth not.
She someth lyke a borr, the beast should seme bolde.
For she is as fyers, as a Lyon of Cotsolde.
She fryeth in her owne grease, but as for my parte,
If she be angry, beshrew her angry harte.
Frend (q he) he mate shew wisdome at wyll,
That with an angry hert can holde his tongue styll.
Let pacience growe in your gardein alwate.
Some loose or od ende will come man, some one date,
From some frende, eyther in lyke, or at his death.
Death (q I) take we that tyme, to take a breath?
Than graffe we a greene graffe on a rotten roote,
Who waitth for dead mens shoen, shal go log barfoote
Let pase (q he) and let vs be trudgeyng.
Where some noppy ale is, and softe swete ludgeyng.
Be it (q I) but I would very fayne eate.
At breakfast and dyner I eete little meate.
And two hungry meales mase the thryde a glutton.
We went where we had boylde beefe & bake mutton.

Wherof I fed me as full as a tunne.
And a bed were we er the clocke had nine tunne.
Early we rose, in haste to get awaie.
And to the hostler this morning by daie
This felow calde. what how felow, thou knaue,
I praie the leat me and my felowe haue
A heare of the dog that bote vs last nyght.
And bitten were we both to the brayne aright,
We sawe eche other drunke in the good ale glas,
And so dyd eche one eche other, that there was.
Saue one, but olde men saie that are skyld,
A hard soughten feeld, where no man scapeth vnkyld.
The reckning reckned he, needs would pay the shot,
And nedes he must for me, for I had it not.
This doone we shoke hands, and parted in fyne,
He into his waie, and I into myne.
But this iorney was quite out of my waie.
Many kynsfolke and few frends, some folke saie.
But I fynde many kynsfolke, and frende not one.
Folke saie, it hath ben saied many yeres sens gone.
Proue thy frend er thou haue nede. but in dede.
A freende is neuer knowen tyll a man haue nede.
Before I had nede, my most present foes
Semed my most frends. but thus the worlde goes,
Euery man basteth the fat hog we see.
But the leane shall burne er he basted bee.
As seyth this sentence, oft and long saied before.
He that hath plentie of goodes shall haue more,
He that hath but a little, he shall haue lesse.
He that hath right nought, right nought shal possesse.

Thus

Thus hauing right nought, & wold somwhat obtain,
With right nought (q he) I am retornd again.

The. xii. chapiter.

Surely (q I) ye haue in this tyme thus worne
Made a long harueſt for a little corne.
Howe be it, comfort your ſelfe with this old text,
That telth vs, when bale is hekſt, boote is next.
Though euery man maie not ſyt in the chayre.
Yet alway the grace of God is worthy a fayre.
Take no thought in no caſe, God is where he was.
But put caſe in pouertie all your lyfe pas.
Yet pouertie and poore degree, taken well.
Feedth on this. he that neuer clymbde, neuer fell.
And ſom caſe at ſom tyme ſheweth preeſe ſomwhere,
That riches bryngth oft harme, and euer feare.
Where pouertie paſſeth without grudge of greeſe.
What man, the begger maie ſyng before the theef.
And who can ſyng ſo merry a note,
As maie he, that can not chaunge a grote?
Ye (q he) beggers maie ſyng before theeues,
And wepe before true men, lamentyng their greeues.
Some ſaie, and I fele hunger perſeth ſtone wall.
Weate nor yet money to bye meate withall,
Haue I not ſo muche as maie hunger defende
Fro my wyfe and me. Well (q I) God will ſende
Tyme to prouide for tyme, right well ye ſhall ſe.
God ſende that prouiſion in tyme, ſated he.
And thus ſemyng weary wery of his lyfe,
The poore wretche wēt to his like poore wretched wife.

From

Frō wauntōnes to wretchednes, brought on their knees
Their hertes ful heauy, their heddes be full of bees.
And after this a monthe, or somewhat lesse,
Their landlorde came to their house to take a tresse
For rent, to haue kept Bayard in the stable.
But that to wyn, any power was vnable.
For though it be yll playyng with short daggers,
Whiche meaneth, that euery wise man staggers,
In earnest or boorde to be busy or bolde
With his biggers or betters. yet this is tolde.
Where as nothyng is, the kyng must lose his right.
And thus, kyng or keyser must haue set them quight.
But warnyng to departe thens they neded none.
For er the next day the byrdes were flowne eche one,
To seke seruice. of whiche where the man was sped,
The wyfe could not speede, but maugre her hed,
She must seke els where. for either there, or ny,
Seruice for any suite she none could espy.
All folke thought them not onely to lyther,
To lyuger bothe in one howse togyther,
But also dwellyng ny vnder their wyngs,
Vnder their noses, they might conuey thyngs.
Suche as were nother to heuy nor to whot.
More in a month than they their maister got
In a whole yere. Wherto folke further weiyng,
Receite eche of other in their conueiyng,
Myght be worst of all. For this prouerbe preeues,
Where be no receiuers, there be no theeues.
Suche hap here hapt, that cōmon drede of such gyles,
Droue them and kepeth them a sonder many myles.

Thus

Thus though loue decre, departure death to be,
Yet pouertee parteth felowshyp we see.
And doth those two trew louers so disseuer,
That meete shal thei seld whan, or haply neuer.
And thus by loue, without regard of lyuyng,
These twayn haue wrought eche others yll cheuyng
And loue hath so lost them the loue of their freends,
That I thinke them lost, and thus this tale eends.

¶ The. xiii. chapiter.

AH sir (saied my frend) whā men will neds mary,
I see nowe, howe wisedom and hast maie vary,
Namely where they wed for loue altogyther.
I wold for no good, but I had come hyther.
Swete beautie with loure beggery, naie I am gon,
To the welthy wythred wydow, by Seint John.
What ytt in all haste (q I) Ye (quoth he)
For she hath substance inough. and ye see,
That lacke is the losse of these two yong fooles.
Know ye not (q I) that after wyse mens schooles,
A man should here all parties, er he iudge any?
Why are ye that (quoth he) For this (quoth I)
I tolde you, whan I this began, that I wolde,
Tell you of two couples. and I hauyng tolde
But of the tone, ye be streight starting awey,
As I of the tother had right nought to sey.
Or as your selfe of them right nought should here.
Naie not all so (quoth he) but syns I thynke clere,
There can no waie appere so peinfull a lyfe.
Betwene your yong neybour and his old riche wyfe,

As

As this tale in this yong poore couple doth showe,
And that the most good or least yll ye knowe.
To take at ende, I was at beginnyng bent,
With thanks for this, and your more pein to preuent,
Without any more matter now reuolued,
I take this matter here clerely resolued.
And that ye herein awarde me to forsake,
Beggerly beautie, and riueld richesse take.
Thats iust, if the halfe shall iudge the whole (q I)
But yet here the whole, the whole wholly to try.
To it (q he) than I praie you by and by.
We will dyne first (q I) for it is noone hy.
We maie as well (q he) dine whan this is doone.
The longer forenone the shorter after noone.
All comth to one, and therby men haue gest,
Alwaie the longer fast the shorter west.
We haue had (q I) before ye came, and syn,
Weather, meete to sette paddockes abroode in.
Rain, more thē enough, and whan al shrewes haue dind
Chaunge from foule wether to faire is oft inclind.
And all the shrewes in this parte, sauyng one wife,
That must dine with vs, haue dinde peine of my life.
Now if good chaunge of yll wether be dependyng
Upon her dyet, what were myne offendyng,
To kepe the woman any longer fastyng.
If ye (q he) set all this farre castyng.
For common wealth, as it appereth a clere case,
Reason would your will shuld, and shall take place.

Thus endeth the fyrst part.

The

The second parte.

The first chapiter.

DInners can not be long, where deintyes want,
Where coine is not cõmon, cõmons must be scãt.
In post pase we past from potage to cheese,
And yet this man cryde, alas what tyme we leese.
He would not let vs pause after our repaste,
But apart he pluct me streight, and in all haste,
As I of this poore yong man, and poore yong maid,
Or more poore yong wife, the forsaid words had said,
So praierh he me nowe the processe maie be tolde,
Betweene thother yong man, and riche widow olde.
If ye lacke that (q I) awaie ye must wynde,
With your bolle errand, and halfe thanswer behynd.
Which thyng to do, sens hast thertto shewth you loth,
And to hast your goyng, the daie away goth,
And that tyme losse, again we can not wyn.
Without more losse of tyme, this tale I begyn.

IN THIS late old widow, and than old new wife,
Age and appetite fell at a strong stryfe.
Her lust was as yong as her lyms were olde.
The daie of her weddyng, lyke one to be solde,
She set out her selfe in fine apparell.
She was made lyke a bere pot, or a barell.
A croked hoked nose, beetill browde, biere eyde:
Many men wisshe, for beautifyng that bryde,
Her waste to be gyrde in, and for a boone grace,
Some well fauourd visor, on her yll fauourd face.

But

But with visorlike visage, suche as it was.
She smyrked, and she smylde, but so lisped this las,
That folke myght haue thought it done onely alone,
Of wantonnesse. had not her teth ben gone.
Vpryght as a candle standeth in a socket,
Stode she that daie, so simpre de coket,
Of auncient fathers she toke no cure nor care.
She was to them, as coy as a crokers mare.
She toke thentertaynment of the yong men
All in daisance, as nice as a nuns hen.
I suppose that daie hir eares might well glow.
For all the towne talkt of her, lye and low.
One saied, a well fauourd old waman she is.
The diuell she is, saied on other. and to this,
In came the thyrde, with his .v. egges, and saied,
Fyfty yere ago I knewe hir a trym mayde.
What euer she were than (saied one) she is now,
To become a bryde, as meete as a sowe
To beare a saddle. She is in this mariage
As comely as a cowe in a cage.
Gup with a galde backe gill, come vp to souper.
What myne olde mare woulde haue a newe crouper.
And now myne old hat must haue a new band.
Well (q one) glad is he that hath hir in hand.
A goodly mariage she is, I here saie.
She is so (q one) were the woman awaie.
Well (q an other) fortune this mourth.
And in this case euery man as he loueth,
Quoth the good man, whan that he kyst his cowe.
That kisse (quoth one) doth well here, by god a vowe.

But

But how can she geue a kysse sowre or sweete?
Her chyn and her nose, within halfe an yuche meete.
God is no botcher syr, saied an other.
He shapeth all partes, as eche part mate fitte other.
Well (q one) wisely, let vs leaue this skannyng.
God spede them. be as be mate is no bannyng.
That shalbe, shalbe. and with gods grace they shall
Doo well, and that they so mate, wyshe we all.

THIS wonder (as wonders last) lasted nine daies.
Whiche done, & al gests of this feast gon their waies,
Ordinary householde this man streight began
Very sumptuously, whiche he might well do than,
What he wold haue, he might haue, his wif was set,
In such dotage of hym, that fayre wordes dyd fet,
Gromelsede plentie, and plesure to prefer,
She made muche of him, and he moct muche of her.
I was as (I saied) muche there, and most of all
The fyrst month. in which time such kindues did fal,
Betwene these two counterfaite turtle burdes.
To see his sweete looks, and here her sweete wurdes,
And to thinke wherfore they bothe, put bothe in vre,
It wold haue made a hors breake his halter sure.
At the first fortnight their tickig might haue tought,
Any yong couple, their loue tickes to haue wrought.
Some laught, & said, all thyng is gay that is grene.
Some therto said, the grene new brome swepth clene.
But sens al thyng is the wors for the wearyng,
Decay of clene swepyng folke had in fearyng.
And in dede, er two monthes awaie were crept,
And her biggest bagg into his bosome swept.

Where loue had appered in him to her alway
Hotte as a toste, it grew cold as a kay.
He, at meate caruyng her, and none els before,
Now carued he to all but her, and her no more.
Where her wordꝭ seemd hony, by his smilyng chere,
Now are they mustard. he frowneth them to here.
And whan she sawe swete sauce begyn to waxe sowre,
She waxt as sowre as he, and as well could lowre.
So turned they their tippets by way of exchaunge,
From laughyng to lowryng, & tauntꝭ dyd so raunge,
That in plaine terms, plaine truth to you to vtter,
They two agreed, lyke two cats in a gutter.
Mary sir (q̄ he) by scratchyng and bytyng
Cattꝭ and dogs come togyther. by folkes reckyng.
Togyther by the eares they come (q̄ I) cherely,
How be it those wordꝭ are not voyde here clerely.
For in one state they twayne could not yet settyll.
But wauerynge as the wynde. in docke out nettyll.
Now in now out, now here now there, now sad,
Now mery, now hye now lowe, nowe good now bad.
In whiche vnstedy sturdy stormes streinable.
To know how they bothe were irrefreynable,
Marke how they fell out, and how they fell in.
At thende of a supper she dyd thus begin.

¶ The. ii. chapiter.

HVsbande (q̄ she) I would we were in our nest.
Whā the bely is full, the bones wold be at rest.
So soone vpon supper (saied he) no question,
Slepe maketh yll and vnholsome digestion.

By

By that diete a great disease ons I gat.
And burnt childe fyre dredth. I will beware of that.
What a post of phisyke (saied she) ye a post.
And from post to piller wyse, I haue ben tost
By that surfet. And I feele a litrell fit,
Euen nowe. by former attemptyng of it.
Wherby, except I shall seeme to leaue my wyt,
Before it leaue me, I must now leaue it.
I thanke God (q she) I neuer yet felt payne,
To go to bed tymely, but risyng agayne
To soone in the mornyng, hath me displeased.
And I (quoth he) haue been more diseased,
By early lyyng downe, than by early risyng.
But thus differ folke lo, in exercisyng.
That that one maie not, an other maie.
Use maketh maistry. and men many tymes saie,
That one loueth not, an other doth, which hath sped,
All meates to be eaten, and all maydes to be wed.
Haste ye to bed now, and syse ye as ye rate.
While I syse early, and come to bed late.
Long lyyng warme in bed is holsome (quoth she)
While the leg warmeth, the boote harmeth (q he)
Well (quoth she) he that doth as most men doo,
Shalbe leste woundred on, and take any too,
That be man and wyfe in all this holle towne.
And moste parte togyther, thei rise and lye downe.
When byrds shall roust (q he) at. viii. ix. or ten,
Who shall appoint their houre. the cocke, or the hen.
The hen (q she) the cocke (q he) iust (quoth she)
As Iermans lips. It shall proue, more iust (q he)

Than proue I (q she) the more foole far awaie.
But there is no foole to the olde foole, folke saie.
Ye are wyse inough (q he) if ye kepe ye warme,
To be kept warme, and for none other harme,
Nor for muche more good, I toke you to wedde.
I toke not you (q he) nyght and daie to bedde.
Her carrain carkas (saied he) is so colde,
Because she is aged, and somwhat to olde,
That she kylth me, I doo but rost a stone.
In warmyng her. And shall not I saue one,
As sh' wold saue an other? yes by seint Iohne.
A fyr (q she) mary this geare is alour.
Who that worst maie, shall holde the candell, I see.
I must warme bed for hym should warme it for me.
This medicine thus ministred is sharpe and colde.
But all thyng that is sharpe is short. folke haue tolde.
This trade is nowe begun, but if it holde on,
Then farewell my good daies. they will be soone gon.
Gospell in thy mouth (q he) this stryfe to breake.
How be it, all is not gospell that thou doest speake.
But what nede we lumpe out loue at ones lashyng,
As we shuld now shake hãds. what soft for dashyng.
The fayre lasteth all the yere. we be new knyt,
And so late met, that I feare we parte not yet,
Quoth the baker to the pillory. Which thyng
From dissemperat fondyng, temperance maie bryng.
And this reason to ayde, and make it more strong,
Olde wise folke saie, loue me little, loue me long.
I saie little (saied she) but I thynke more.
Thought is free. Ye leane (q he) to the wrong shore.

Brau-

Braulyng booted not, he was not that nyght bent,
To plaie the bridegrome Alone to bed she went.
This was their begynnyng of iar How be it,
For a beginnyng this was a feat fit,
And but a fleabityng to that did ensew.
The worst is behynd. we come not where it grew.
How saie you (saied he to me) by my wife.
The diuell hath cast a bone (saied I) to set strife
Betwene you. but it were a foly for me,
To put my hand betwene the barke and the tre.
Or to put my fyngar to far in the fyre,
Betwene you, and laie my credence in the myre.
To meddle little for me it is beste.
For of little meddlyng cometh great reste.
Yes ye maie meddle (q he) to make her wyse,
Without takyng harme, in geuing your aduise.
She knowth me not yet, but yf she ware to wyld,
I shall make her knowe, an olde knaue is no chylde.
Sluggyng in bed with her is worse than watchyng.
I promise you an olde sacke areth muche patchyng.
Well (q I) to morowe I will to my beades,
To praie, that as ye bothe will, so ake your heades.
And in meane tyme my akyng head to ease,
I wyll couche a hogs hed. Quoth he whan ye please.
We parted. and this within a daie or twayne,
Was raakt vp in thashes, and couerd agayne.

¶ The. iii. chapiter.

These two daies past, he saied to me, wha ye will,
Come chat at home, al is well. Iak shal haue gyl.

And as we oft see, the lothe stake standeth longe,
So is it an yll stake I haue herd amonge,
That can not stande one yere in a hedge.
I drynke (q she) Quoth he I will not pledge.
What nede all this. a man may loue his house well,
Though he ryde not on the ridge, I haue heard tell.
What, I wene (q she) proferd seruice stynketh.
But somwhat it is, I se, whan the cat wynketh,
And bothe hyr eyne out, but further stryke to shonne,
Let the cat wynke, and leat the mouse ronne.
This past, and he cheered vs all, but most chere
On his part, to this fayre yong wyfe dyd appere.
And as he to her cast ofte a louyng eye,
So cast her husbande tyke eye, to his plate by.
Whet with in a great musyng he was brought.
Freud (q the good man) a peny for your thought.
For my thought (q he) that is a goodly dishe.
But of trouth I thought, better to haue than wishe.
What, a goodly yong wyfe, as you haue (q he)
Nay (q he) goodly gylt goblets, as here be.
Byr ladye freends (q I) this maketh a show,
As shewe you more vnnaturall than the crow.
The crow thinketh hér own birdes fairest in the wood.
But by your woords (except I wrong vnderstood)
Eche others byrdes or iewels, ye doe weie
Aboue your owne. True (q the old wyfe) ye sey.
But my neighbours dishe rightly to measure,
Comth of nede. and not of corrupte pleasure.
And my husbands more of pleasure, than of neede.
Olde fish & yong flesh (q he) doth men best feede.

And

And some sey, chaunge of pasture maketh fat calues.
As for that reason (q she) couth to halues.
As well for the coowe calfe as for the bull.
And though your pasture loke barreinly and dull,
Yet loke not on the meate, but loke on the man.
And who so loketh on you, shall shortly skan,
Ye maie write to your frends, that ye are in helth.
But all thyng maie be suffered saupng welth.
An olde saied sawe, itche and ease, can no man please.
Plentie is no deintie. ye see not your owne ease.
I see, ye can not see the wood for trees.
Your lyps hang in your light. but this poore man sees
Both how blindly ye stand in your owne lyght,
And that yow rose on your right syde here right.
And might haue gon further, and haue faren wurs.
I wot well I might (q he) for the purs,
But ye be a baby of Belsabubs bowre.
Content ye (q she) take the swete with the sowre.
Fancy maie bult bran, and make ye take it floure.
It will not be (q he) should I dye this houre,
Whyle this faire flowre flourisheth thus in mine eye.
Yes, it might (q she) and here this reason why.

Snowe is white
And lyeth in the dyke } And euery man lets it lye.
Pepper is blacke
And hath a good smacke } And euery man doth it bye.
Mylke (q he) is white
And lieth not in the dike } But al me knowe it good meate.
Inke is all blacke
And hath an yll smacke } No man wil it drinke nor eate.

Thy ryme (q he) is muche elder than myne,
But myne beyng newer is trewer than thine.
Thou likenest now, for a vayne aduauntage,
White snow to faire youth, blacke pepper to foul age,
Whiche are placed out of place here by rood.
Blacke ynke is as yll meate, as blacke pepper is good.
And white mylke as good meat, as white snow is yll.
But a milk snow whit smoth yōg skin, who chāge wyl
For a pepper ynke blacke rough olde riueld face?
Though chaunge be no robbry for the chaunged case,
Yet shall that chaunge rob the chaunger of his wit.
For who this case sercheth, shall soone see in it,
That as wel agreeth thy comparison in these,
As a like to compare in taste, chalke and chese.
Or a like in colour to deme ynke and chalke.
Walke drab walke. Nay (q she) walke knaue walke
Saieth that terme. How be it sir, I saie not so.
And best we laie a straw here, and euen there who.
Orels this geare will brede a pad in the strawe.
If ye hale this waie, I will an other waie drawe.
Here is God in thambrie (q I) Quoth he, naie,
Here is the diuell in thorologe, ye maie saie.
Sens this (q I) rather bringeth bale than boote,
Wrap it in the clothe, and treade it vnder foote.
Ye harpe on the stryng, that giueth no melodie.
Your tongs ron before your wits, by seint Antonie.
Mark ye, how she hitteth me on the thomb? (q he)
And ye taunt me tyt ouer thumb (quoth she)
Sens tyt for tat (q I) on euen hand is set,
Set the hares head against the gose ieblet.

She

She is (q he) bent to loſe you perforce
To know, that the grey mare is the better horſe.
She chopth logyk, to put me to my clargie.
She hath one point of a good hauke, ſhe is hardie.
But wife, the firſt point of haukyng is holde faſt.
And holde ye faſt, I red you, leſt ye be caſt,
In your own tourne. Nate ſhe will tourne the leafe.
And rather (q I) take as faſtly in the ſheafe.
At your hands. and let fall her holde, than be to bold.
Nate, I will ſpit in my hands, and take better hold.
He (q ſhe) that will be angry without cauſe,
Muſt be at one, without amends. by ſage ſawes.
Treade a worme on the taile, and it muſt tourne again.
He taketh pepper in the noſe, that I complain
Upon his fautes, my ſelf beyng fautleſſe.
But that ſhall not ſtop my mouth, ye mate well geſſe.
Well (q I) to muche of one thyng is not good.
Leaue of this. Be it (q he) falle we to our food.
But ſuffrance is no quittance in this batment.
No (quoth ſhe) nor mifreckenyng is no paiment.
But euen reckenyng maketh long frends, my freend.
For alwaie owne is owne, at the reckenyngs end.
This reckenyng thus reckned, and dyner ons doone,
We threr from them twaine, departed verry ſoone.

The. v. chapiter.

THis olde woman the next daie after this night,
Stale home to me, ſecretly as ſhe might.
To talke with me, in ſecrete counſell (ſhe ſaied)
Of thynges whiche in no wyſe might be bewraied.

We twayne are one to many (q I) for men saie,
Three may kepe a counsell, if two be awaie.
But all that ye speake, vnmete again to tell,
I will saie nought but mum, and mum is counsell.
Well than (q she) herein auoidyng all feares,
Auoyd your children. smal pitchers haue wyde eares.
Whiche done (she saied) I haue an husband, ye know.
Whom I made of nought, as the thyng self doth show
And for these two causes onely hym I tooke.
First, that for my loue, should louingly looke,
In all kyndes of cause, that loue ingender myght,
To loue and cherishe me by daie and by night.
Secondly, the substance, whiche I to hym brought,
He rather should augment, than bryng to nought.
But now my good, shall both be spent, ye shall see,
And if in spendyng soole instrument shall bee
Of my destruction. by spendyng it on suche
As shall make hym destroy me. I feare this muche.
He maketh hauok and setteth cocke on the hoope.
He is so lauets, the stocke begynneth to droope.
And as for gayne is deade, and layed in tumbe.
When he should get ought, eche synger is a thumbe,
Eche of his toyntes against other iustles,
As handsomely as a beare pickerh muscles.
Flattring knaues & fleryng queans beyond the marke,
Hang on his sleue. many hands make light warke.
He hath his haukes in the mew. but make ye sure,
With empty hands men maie no haukes allure.
There is a nest of chickens, whiche he doth brood,
That wil sure make his hear grow through his hood.

They

They can currifauell, and make fayre wether,
Whyle they cut large thongs of other mens lether.
He maketh his marts with marchants likely,
To bryng a shillyng to .ix. pens quickely.
If he holde on a while, as he begins,
We shall se hym proue a marchant of eele skyns.
A marchaunt, without either money or ware.
But all be bugs words, that I speake to spare.
Better spare at brym than at bottom, sate I.
Euer spare and euer bare, saieth he, by and by.
Spend, & god shall send (saieth he) saith tholde balet.
What sendth he (sate I) a staffe, and a wallet.
Than vp gothe his staffe, to send me a louse.
He is at three woords vp in the house rouse.
And herein to growe (q she) to conclusion,
I praie your ayde, to auoyd this confusion.
And for counsell herein, I thought to haue gon,
To that cunnyng man, our curate sir John.
But this kept me backe, I haue herd now and then,
The greatest clerks be not the wysest men.
I thynk (q I) who euer that terme began,
Was neither great clerke, nor the greatest wise man.
In your rennyng from hym to me, ye toon
Out of gods blessyng into the warme soon.
Where the blynd leadth the blynd, both fal in the dike.
And blynde we be both, yf we thynke vs his like.
Folke show much foly, whan thyngs should be sped,
To ren to the foote, that maie go to the hed.
Sens he best can, and most ought to doo it,
I feare not, but he will, if ye wyll woo it.

There

There is one let (q she) mo than I spake on,
My husband and he be so great, that the ton
Can not pisse, but the tother must let a fart.
Choose we him aparty, than farwell my part.
We shall so parte stake, that I shall lese the hole.
Folk say of olde, the shooe will holde with the sole.
Shall I trust hym then? nai in trust is treason.
But I trust you, and come to you this season
To here me, and tell me, what waie ye thynke best,
To hem in my husband, and set me in rest.
If ye mynde (q I) a conquest to make
Ouer your husband, no man maie vndertake
To bryng you to ease, nor the matter amende.
Except ye bring him to weare a cocks comb at ende.
For take that your husband were, as ye take hym,
As I take him not, as your tale would make hym,
Yet were contencion lyke to do nought in this,
But kepe hym nought, and make him wors than he is,
But in his complaint, for counsell quitke and clere,
A few prouerbs for principuls, leat vs here.
Who that maie not as they wold, will as thei maie.
And this to this, they that are bound must obaie.
Foly it is to spourne ayainst a pricke,
To striue against the streme. to winche or kicke
Against the hard wall. By this ye maie see,
Beyng bound to obedience, as ye be.
And also ouermatched, sufferaunce is your daunce.
Ye maie ouermatche me (q she) perchaunce
In strength of bodie, but my tung is a lym,
To matche and to vexe euery vayne of hym.

Young

Toung breaketh bone, it self hauyng none (& I)
If the wynd stande in that doore, it standth awry.
The peryll of pratyng out of tune by note,
Telth vs, that a good be styll is worth a grote.
In beyng your own foe, you spyn a fayre threede.
Aduise ye well, for here doth all lye and bleede,
Flee thattemptyng of extremitees all.
Folke saie, better syt styll than ryse and fall.
For littell more or lesse no debate make,
At euery dogs barke, seeme not to awake.
And where the small with the great, can not agree,
The weaker goeth to the potte, we all daie see.
So that alwaie the bygger eateth the beane.
Ye can nought wyn, by any wayward meane.
Where the hedge is lowest, men maie soonest ouer.
Be silent. Leat not your tong roon at rouer.
Sens by strife, ye maie lose, and can not wyn,
Suffer. It is good slepyng in a whole skyn.
If he chyde, kepe you bill vnder wyng muet.
Chattyng to chidyng is not woorth a chuet.
We see many tymes, might ouercomth right.
Were not you as good thā to say, the crow is whight.
And so rather let fayre woordes make fooles fayn,
Thā be plain without plites, & plant your own payn.
For were ye as playne as Dunstable hye waie.
Yet should ye that waie rather breake a loue daie,
Than make one. thus though ye perfitly knew,
All that ye coniecture to be proued trew,
Yet better dissemble it, and shake it of,
Than to broyd him with it in earnest or scof.

If he plate falſehed in felowſhip, plate ſe,
Se me, and ſe me not. the woꝛſt part to ſe.
Why thinke ye me ſo white lyuered (q ſhe?)
That I wyll be tong tied? Nate I warrant ye.
They that wyll be afrayd of euery karte,
Muſt go far to piſſe. Well (q I) your parte
Is to ſuffer (I ſaie.) Foꝛ ye ſhall pꝛeeue,
Taunt ſ appeaſe not thyng ſ, they rather agreeue.
But foꝛ yll company, oꝛ expenſe extreeme,
If bere no man doubte, ſo far as ye deeme.
And there is no fyꝛe without ſome ſmoke, we ſee.
Well well, make no fyꝛe, reyſe no ſmoke (ſaid ſhee)
What cloke foꝛ the rayne ſo euer ye bꝛyng me,
My ſelfe can tell beſt, where my ſhoe doth wꝛyng me.
But as ye ſaie, where fyꝛe is, ſmoke will appere.
And ſo hath it doone. Foꝛ I did lately here,
How ſlek and his make, vſe their ſecrete hauntyng,
By one byꝛd, that in myne eare was late chauntyng.
One ſwalow maketh not ſommer (ſaid I) men ſaie.
I haue (q ſhe) mo blockſ in his waie to laie.
Foꝛ further encreaſe of ſuſpicion of yls,
Beſyde his ſettyng into the towne, to his gils,
With caletſ he conſumeth hꝛm ſelf and my goods,
Sometyme in the feelds, ſometyme in the woods.
Some here and ſe him, whom he hereth noꝛ ſeeth not.
But feeldſ haue eies, and woods haue eares. ye wot.
And alſo on my maydes he is euer tootyng.
Can ye iudge a man (q I) by his lookyng?
What, a cat may looke on a kyng. ye know.
My cats leeryng looke (q ſhe) at firſt ſhow,

Shewth

Shewth me, that my cat gothe a ratterwawyng.
And ſpecially by his maner of drawyng,
To Madge my fayre maide. for maie he come ny her.
He muſt nedes daſſe her, as he comth by her.
He loueth wel ſheeps fleſh, ꝑ wets his bred in the wul
Iſ he leaue it not, we haue a crowe to pull.
He loueth her better at the ſole of the foote,
Than euer he loued me at the hert roote.
It is a foule bird, that fyleth his owne neſt.
I wold haue him liue as gods lawe hath expreſt.
And leaue leude tickyng. he that will none yll do.
Muſt do nothyng, that belongeth therto.
To ticke and laugh with me, he hath laufull leeue.
To that I ſaied nought, but laught in my ſleeue.
But whan ſhe ſemed to be fixed in mynde,
Rather to ſeke for that ſhe was lothe to fynde,
Than leue that ſekyng, by which ſhe might fynd eaſe.
I fainde this fancy to feele how it wold pleaſe.
Will ye do well (ꝙ I) take peyne to watche hym.
And if ye chaunce in aduoutry to catche hym,
Then haue ye him on the hyp, or on the hyndell.
Then haue ye his head faſt vnder your gyrdell.
Where your words now do but rub him on the gall.
That dede without words ſhall driue him to the wall.
And further than the wall, he can not go.
But muſt ſubmit him ſelfe. and if it hap ſo,
That at ende of your watche, he giltles appere,
Than al grudge, growne by ielouſy, taketh end clere.
Of all folk (I maie worſt watche him ſaieth ſhe)
For of all folk hym ſelfe moſt watcheth me.

e.
into the fyre.
wors is worth smal hyre.
trouth in euery dout.
hath tried the trouth out.
two sorowes of one.
here reason maketh none.
) wilth you to winke,
s yll as ye thynke)
t and ye stare.
as a marche hare.
present or passe.
e proue lies at lasse.
ie, for ye iudge all,
proke in ought fall.
o coloures.by old sawes.
lynd in their owne cause.
Howbeit the fancy,
t of ignorancy.
the best waie.
ot as folke saie.
yng are two thyngs,
uble dealyng byngs.
nd s, be wyse in dede.
han done, I drede.
weyth in the whole,
in a hole.
ther,
owe togyther,
yem shall wyn
than they can wel spyn.
e it And

Leape out of the fryng pan
And chaūge from pl pein to
Let tyme trie. Tyme trieth
And deme the beſt, till time
And reaſon ſaieth, make not
But ye make ten ſorowes wh
For where reaſon (as I ſaid
(Although all were proued a
Contrary to reaſon ye ſtampe
Ye fret and ye fume as mad a
Without proſe to his reproſe
But by ſuch repoꝛte, as moſte
And here gothe the hare awa
And iudge the woꝛſt in all, er
But blynd men ſhuld iudge n
And folk oft tymes ar moſt bl
The blynde eate many flies.
Of your blindneſſe comth not
Ye coulde tell an other herein
But it is as folke booe, and n
For thei ſate, ſatyng and doo
To defende daunger, that dou
As ye can ſeeme wyſe in woo
That is (ye ſhe) ſooner ſayd th
But me thinkth your counſell
To make me put my fynger i
And ſo by ſuffrance to be ſo lyt
In my houſe to ley fyre and t
But if they fyre me, ſome of th
Moꝛe towe on their diſtaues, t

I shall as soone trye him or take him this waie,
As driue a top ouer a tyeld house, no naie.
I maie kepe corners or holowe trees with thowle,
This seuen yeres, daie and night to watche a bowle.
Before I shall catche hym with vndoubted euill.
He must haue a long spoone, shal ete with the diuell.
And the dtuell is no falser than is he.
I haue oft herd tell, it had nede to be
A wyly mous that should breede in the cats eare.
Shall I get within him than? nay ware that geare.
It is hard haltyng before a cripple, ye wot.
A falser water drinker there liueth not.
When he hunteth a doe, that he can not auow,
All dogs barke not at hym. I warrant you.
Namely not I, I saie, though, as I sayde,
He sometyme, though seldome, by some be bewrayde.
Close huntyng (q I) the good hunter alowth.
But be your husband neuer so still of mowth,
If ye can hunte, and will staude at receite,
Your mayde examynde, maketh him open streite.
That were (q she) as of my truthe to make preeke,
To axe my felow, whether I be a theeke.
They cleue together lyke burs. that waie I shall
Pike out no more, than out of the stone wall.
Than lyke ye not to watche hym for wife nor mayde.
No (q she.) Nor I (q I) what euer I sayde.
And I mislyke not onely your watche in vayne.
But also if ye tooke hym. What could ye gayne?
From suspicion to knowlage of yll for sothe,
Could make ye doo, but as the flounder dothe.

Leaue

And the best of them shall haue both their handes full,
Bolster or pyllow for me, be whose will.
I will not beare the diuels sacke, by saint Audry.
For coucelyng suspicion of their baudry.
I keare kaulse measures, or els I were a chylde.
For they that thynke none yll, are sonest begylde.
And thus though muche water go by the myll,
That the myller knoweth not of, yet I will
Taste what may scape. and as though I did fynd it,
With the clak of my myll, to fine meale grinde it.
And sure er I take any rest in effect,
I must banishe my maides suche as I suspect.
Better it be doone than wishe it had been doone.
As good vndoone (q I) as doo it to soone.
Well (q she) still soone, kare ye well, and this
Kepe now as secrete, as ye thynke mete is.
Out at dores went she herewith. and herevpon
In at doores came he forthwith as she was gon.
And without any tempyrate protestacion,
Thus he began, in waie of exclamacion.

¶ The. vi. chapiter.

O what choyse may compare, to ẏ diuels lyke,
Lyke his, that hath chosen a diuell to his wyfe:
Namely suche an olde witche, suche a mackabzoyne,
As euermoze like a hog hangeth the groyne,
On her husband. except he be her slaue,
And folow all fancies, that she would haue.
This prouerbe proueth, there is no good accorde,
Where euery man would be a Lorde.

Wher-

Wherefore my wyfe will be no lorde, but lady.
To make me, that ſhould be her Lorde, a baby.
Before I was wedded, and ſens, I made reckyng,
To make my wyfe boow at euery beckyng.
Bachelers boſt, how they wil teche their wiues good,
But many a man ſpeaketh of Robin hood,
That neuer ſhotte in his bowe. When all is ſought,
Bachelers wyues, and maides children be well tought.
And this with this, I alſo begyn to gather,
Euery man can rule a ſhrewe, ſaue he that hath her.
At my wil I wend ſhe would haue wrought, like war.
But I finde and feele, ſhe hath found ſuche knar
In her bouget, and ſuche toies in her hed,
That to daunce after her pipe, I am my led.
It is ſaied of olde, an olde dog bith ſore.
But by God, tholde bitche biteth ſorer and more.
And not with teeth (ſhe hath none) but with her toug.
If all tales be true (& I) though ſhe be ſtong,
And therby ſtyng pow, ſhe is not muche to blame.
For what euer you ſaie, thus goeth the fame,
When folke firſt ſaw your ſubſtance laid in your lap.
without your pein, & your wyfe brought by good hap
Oft in remembrance of haps happy deuiſe,
They would ſaie, better to be happy than wyſe.
Not myndyng therby than, to deprane your wit,
For they had good hope, to ſee good profe of it.
But ſens their good opinion therin ſo tooles,
That they ſaie as ofte, God ſendeth fortune to fooles.
In that as fortune without your wyt gaue it,
So can your wyt not kepe it when ye haue it.

Saieth one, this geare was gotten on a holy daie.
Saieth an other, who maie holde that will awaie.
This game frō beginnyng, shewth what end is ment.
Soone gotten soone spent, yll gotten yll spent.
Ye are calde not onely to great a spender,
To franke a giuer, and as free a lender,
But also ye spende geue and lende, among suche,
Whose lightnesse ministeth your honestie as muche,
As your moncie, and muche thei disalow,
That ye driue all from her, that brought all to yow.
And spend it out at doors, in spite of her,
Because ye wolde kyll her, to be quite of her.
For all kyndnesse of her parte, that maie ryse,
Ye shewe all thunkyndesse ye can deuise.
And where reason and custome (thei saie) afoords
Alwaie to let the loosers haue their woords,
Ye make her a cookquean, and consume her good.
And she must sit lyke a beane in a monks hood.
Bearyng no more rule, than a goose turde in tems.
But at her owne maidens becks, wynks, or hems,
She must obey those lambs, or els a lams skyn,
Ye will prouide for her to lay her in.
This biteth the mare by the thumbe, as thei sey.
For where ye, touchyng condicion (saie they)
The castell of honestie in all thyngs els:
Yet shoulde this one thyng, as their holle tale tels,
Defoule and deface that castell to a cotage.
One crop of a tourde marrth a pot of potage.
And some to this, crye, let hym pas, for we thynke,
The more we stur a tourde, the wours it will stynke.

With

With many condicions good, one that is yll,
Defaceth the floure of all, and dothe all spyll.
Nowe (q I) if you thinke they truely clatter,
Let your amendment amende the matter.
Half warnd half armd. this warning for this I show
He that hath an yll name, is halfe hangd. ye know.

¶ The. vii. chapiter.

Vwell saied (saied he) mary sir here is a tale,
For honestie, meete to set the diuell on sale.
But nowe am I forst, a bead roll to vnfolde,
To tell somwhat more to the tale I erst tolde.
Know thie, as most part doth I durst holde my lyfe,
Of the ielousy of dame Julok my wyfe,
Than shall ye wonder, whan truth doth define,
How she can, and dothe here, both bite and whine.
Frensy, heresy, and ielousy are three,
That men saie hardly or neuer cured bee.
And although ielousy nede not or boote not,
What helpeth that counsell, if reason roote not.
And in madde ielousy she is so farre gon,
She thinkth I coon ouer all, that I looke on.
Take good hede of that (q I) for at a worde,
The prouerbe saieth, he that striketh with the sworde,
Shall be striken with the scaberd. Tushe (q he)
The diuell with my scaberde will not strike me.
But my dame taking suspicion for full preefe,
Reporteth it for trouth, to the most mischeefe.
In words gold and hole, as men by wyt could wishe.
She will lye as fast as a dogge will licke a dishe.

She is of trouth as fals, as God is trew.
And if she chaunce to see me at a vew
Kysse any of my maides alone, but in sporte,
That taketh she in ernest. after Bedleeme sorte.
The coow is wood. Her tong routh on patens.
If it be morne, we haue a payre of matens.
If it be euen, euensong. not Latin nor Greeke,
But Englishe, and lyke thutas in easter weeke.
She beginneth, fyrst with a cry a leysone.
To whiche she ringth a peale, a larom. such one,
As folk rig bees wt basons. ꝑ would routh on wheles.
But except her mayde shewe a faire payre of heles,
She haleth her by the boy rope, tyll her brayns ake.
And bryng I home a good dishe, good chere to make,
What is this (saith she) Good meat (saie I) for yow
God a mercy hors, a pig of mine owne sowe.
Thus whan I se, by kyndnesse ease renewth not,
And than, that the eye seeth not, the herte rewth not,
And that he must nedes go, whom the diuel doth driue
Her fors forsyng me, for mine ease to contriue,
To leat her taste and freat alone for me,
I go where merry chat, and good chere mate be.
Much spend I abrode, which at home shuld be spent,
If she would leaue controllyng, and be content.
There lepte a whityng (q she) and lept in streite.
Take a beare from his berde, & marke this conceite.
He maketh you beleue, by lyes leyde on by lode,
My braulyng at home, maketh hym banket abrode.
Where his bankets abrode, make me braule at home.
For as in a frost, a mud wall made of lome

Cracketh

Cracketh and crummeth in peeces a sonder,
So melteth his money, to the worldes wonder.
Thus maie ye see, to tourne the cat in the pan,
Or set the cart before the hors, well he can.
He is but littell at home, the trewth is so.
And forth with him, he will not let me go.
And if I come to be mery where he is,
Than is he mad. as ye shall here by this.
Where he with gossips at a banket late was,
At whiche as vse is, he payde all. but let pas.
I came to be mery. wherwith merily,
Proface. haue among you blynde harpers (said I.)
The mo the merier, we all daie here and se.
Ye, but the fewer the better fare (saied he)
Then here were, er I came (q I) to many.
Here is littel meate lefte, if there be any.
And it is yll commyng, I haue heard say,
To thend of a shot, and beginnyng of a fray.
Put vp thy purs (q he) thou shalt none pay.
And fray here should be none, were thou gon thy way.
Here, is syns thou camst, to many fett a bed,
Welcome when thou goest. thus is thyn errand sped.
I come (q I) to be one here, yf I shall,
It is mery in halle, whan berdes wag all.
What, bid me welcome pyg. I pray the kys me.
Nay farewell sow (q he) our lord blys me
From ballyng of beast of Beare bynder lane,
I haue (q I) for kyne suger, faire rats bane.
Many peres sens, my mother saied to me,
Her elders would saie, it is better to be

An olde mans derlyng, then a yong mans werlyng.
And god knowth, I knewe none of this ſnerlyng.
In my olde huſbandꝭ daies. for as tenderly,
He loued me, as ye loue me ſclenderly.
We drew both by one lyne. Quoth he, wold to our lord
Ye had in that drawyng, hangd both in one cord.
For I'truer meete the at fleſhe nor at fiſhe,
But I haue ſure a deade mans head in my diſhe.
Whoſe beſt and my worſt daie, that wight might be,
Was when thou didſt bury him, and mary me.
If you (q I) long for chaunge in thoſe caſes,
Wold to god he and you had chauged places.
But beſt I change place, for here I may be ſparde.
And for my kynde comyng, this is my rewarde.
Claw a chorle by thars, and he chiteth in my hand.
Knak me that nut. much good doyt you all this band.
Muſte ſhe not (q he) be welcome to vs all,
Among vs all, lettyng ſuche a farewell fall?
But ſuch carpenters, ſuch chips. Quoth ſhe, folke tell,
Such lips, ſuch ietiſe. ſuche welcom ſuch farewell.
Thine owne wordꝭ (q he) thine own welcome mard.
Well (ſaied ſhe) whan ſo euer we twayn haue iard,
My woordꝭ be pyped at narowly, I eſpye.
Ye can ſee a mote in an others mans iye,
But ye can not ſe a balke in your owne.
Ye marke my woordꝭ, but not that they be growne,
By reuellous ridyng on euery royle.
Well ny euery daie a newe mace or a moyle.
As muche vnhoneſt, as vnprofitable.
Whiche ſhall bryng vs ſhortly to be vnable,

To

To geue a dog a lofe. as I haue oft layde.
Howe be it pour pleasure mate no tyme be denayde.
But still you must haue, both the finest meate,
Apparell, and all thyng that money mate geate,
Lyke one of fonde fancy so fyne and so neate,
That would haue better bred thā is made of wheate.
The best is best cheape (q he) men sate clere.
Well (q she) a man mate bye golde to dere,
Ye nother care, nor welny casse what ye pate,
To bye the derest for the best alwate.
Than for your diet who bseth seedyng suche,
Eate more than enough, & drink much more to muche.
But temprance teacheth this, where he kepeth scoole,
He that knoweth whan he hath enough, is no foole.
Fede by measure, and defie the phisicion,
And in the contrary, marke the condicion,
A swyne ouer fat, is cause of her owne bane.
Who seeth nought herein, his witis in the wane.
But pompous prouision, comth not all, alway
Of gluttony, but of pride somtime, some saie.
But this prouerbe preacheth to men haute or hye,
Hewe not to hie, lest the chips fall in thine eye.
Measure is a mery meane, as this dothe show.
Not to hy for the pye, nor to lowe for the crow.
The difference betwixt sparyng, and sparke bynde,
The wyse man at all tymes to folowe can fynde.
And ywis an auditour of a meane wyt,
Mate soone accompt, though hereafter come not yet:
Yet is he sure be the date neuer so long,
Euermore at laste they cryng to euensong.

And

And where ye ſpend muche, though ye ſpēt but lickell,
Yet litle and litle the cat eateth the fickell.
Littell loſſe by lenght mate growe importable.
A mouſe in tyme, mate byte a two a gable.
Thus to ende of all thyngꝭ, be we leefe or lothe.
Yet lo, the pot ſo long to the water gothe,
Tyll at the laſte it comthe home broken.
Few woordꝭ to the wyſe ſuffice to be ſpoken.
If ye were wyſe, here were enough (q ſhe)
Here is enough, and to muche, dame (q he)
For though this appere a propre pulpet peeſe,
Yet whan the foxe preacheth than beware our geeſe.
A good tale yll tolde, in the tellyng is marde.
So are (q ſhe) good tales well tolde, and yll hearde.
Thy tales (q he) ſhew long heare, and ſhort wit, wife.
But long be thy legs, and ſhort be thy life.
Praie for your ſelfe, I am not ſicke (q ſhe)
Well lets ſee, what thy laſt tale comth to (q he)
Thou ſaieſt I ſpend all, to this, thy woordꝭ wander.
But as deepe drynketh the gooſe, as the gander.
Thou canſt cough in the ambry, yf nede be,
Whan I ſhall cough without breade or broth for the.
Wherby while thou ſendſt me abrode to ſpend,
Thou gollepſt at home, to mete me at landꝭ ende.
Ah, than I begyle yow (q ſhe) this ye meane.
But fyr, my pot is whole, and me water cleane.
Well, thou wouldſt haue me (q he) pinche like a ſnudge
Euery daie to be thy driuell, or thy drudge.
Not ſo (q ſhe) but I would haue ye ſtur
Honeſtlie, to kepe the wulfe from the dur.

I would driue the wulfe out at doore fyrst (q he)
And that can I not doo, tyll I driue out the.
A man were better be drownde in Venyce gulfe,
Than haue suche a bearded beare, or suche a wulfe.
But had I not been witcht, my weddyng to flee,
The termes that long to weddyng had warnde me.
First wooyng for woyng, banna for bannyng.
The banes for my bane, and than this thus scannyng,
Mariyng. marryng. And what maried I than?
A woman. As who saieth, wo to the man.
Thus wed I with wo. wed I Gill, wed I Iane.
I praie God the diuell go with the, downe the lane.
I graunt (q she) this doth sound (as ye agreed)
On your side in woord, but on my syde in deed.
Thou grantst this grant (q he) without any grace,
Ungraciousely, to thy side, to tourne this case.
Leaue this (q she) and learne liberalitie.
To stint strife, growne by your prodigalitie.
Oft saied the wyse man, whom I erst did bery,
Better ar meales many, than one to mery.
Well (q he) that is answered with this wyfe,
Better is one months chere, than a churles hole lyfe.
I thinke it learnyng of a wyser lectour,
To learne to make my selfe myne owne exectour,
Than spare for an other, that might wed the,
As the foole, thy first husband, spared for me,
And as for yll places, thou sekest me in mo,
And in worse to, than I into any go.
Wherby this prouerbe shewth the in by the weke.
No man will an other in the ouen seeke,

Ex-

Except that hym selfe haue beene there before,
God geue grace thou hast beene good. I saie no more.
And wold haue the saie lesse. except thou couldst proue
Suche processe, as thou slaunderously doest moue,
For sclaunder perchaunce (q she) I not denye.
It maie be a sclaunder, but it is no lye.
It is a lye (q he) and thou a lyer.
Wtil ye (q she) driue me to touche ye nyer?
I rub the gald hors backe till he winche, and yit,
He wold make it seme, that I touche him no whit.
But I wot what I wot, though I few words make,
Many kysse the chylde for the nurces sake.
Ye haue many god chyldren to looke vpon.
And ye blesse theim all, but ye basse but one.
This half shewth, what the holle meanth, ẏ I meue,
Ye fet circumquaques to make me beleeue
Or thynke, that the moone is made of a greene cheese.
And whan ye haue made me a lout in all these,
It semeth ye would make me go to bed at noone.
Nate (q he) the date of dome shall be doone,
Er thou go to bed at noone or night for me.
Thou art, to be playne, and not to flatter the,
As holsome a morsell for my comely cors,
As a shoulder of mutton for a sicke hors.
The diuell with his dam, hath more rest in hell,
Than I haue here with the. but well wife well.
Well well (q she) many wels, many buckets.
Ye (quoth he) and many words, many buffets.
Had you some husband, and snapt at hym thus,
Iwys he would geue you a recumbentibus.

A dog will barke er he bite, and ſo thow,
After thy barkyng wilt bite me, I trowe now.
But it is harde to make an olde dog ſtoupe, ls.
Sir (q ſhe) a man maie handle his dog ſo,
That he may make hī bite him, though he would not.
Huſband ſ art in heauen (q he) whoſe wiues ſcold not.
Thou makeſt me claw where it itcheth not. I wold
Thy toug were coolde to make thy tales more cold.
That aſpene leafe, ſuche ſpiteful clappyng hath bred,
That my cap is better at eaſe than my hed.
God ſend that hed (ſaied ſhe) a better nurs.
For when the hed aketh, all the body is the wurs.
God graunt (q I) the hed and body both too.
To nours eche other, better than they doo.
Or euer haue doone for the moſt tymes paſte.
I brought to nurs both (q ſhe) had not ben waſte.
Margery good cowe (q he) gaue a good meele,
But than ſhe caſte it downe agayn with her heele.
How can her purſe for profite be delitefull ?
Whoſe perſone and propreties be thus ſpitefull.
A peece of a kid is worth two of a cat.
Who the diuell will chaunge a rabet for a cat ?
If I myght chaunge, I wolde rather chuſe to begge.
Or ſit with a roſted appull, or an egge,
Where mine appetite ſerueth me to be,
Than euery daie to fare lyke a duke with the.
Lyke a duke, lyke a duck (q ſhe) thou ſhalt fare,
Except thou wilt ſpare, more thā thou doeſt yet ſpare.
Thou fareſt to well (q he) but thou art ſo wood,
Thou knowſt not who doth ꝑ harm, who doth ꝑ good.

yes

Yes yes (q she) for all those wyse words vttred,
I knowe on whiche syde my breade is buttred,
But there will no butter cleaue on my breade.
And on my breade any butter to be spreade,
Euery promise that thou therin doest vtter,
Is as sure, as it were sealed with butter.
Or a mouse tyed with a threede. Euery good thyng,
Thou letteſt euen slyp, lyke a wag halter slipstryng.
But take vp in tyme, or els I protest,
All be not abedde, that shall haue yll rest.
Nowe go to thy berlynges and declare thy greefe.
Where all thy pleasure is. hop hoze, pype theefe.

¶ The. viii. chapiter.

With this thes hopt she, wherwith o lord he cride
What wretch but I, this wretchednes could bide
How be it in all this wo, I haue no wrong,
For it onely is all on my selfe along.
Where I shuld haue bridled her first with rough bit.
To haue made hir chowe on the brydell one fit,
For licorous lucre of a little winnyng,
I gaue her the brydell at beginnyng.
And now she taketh the brydle in the teeth,
And runth awaie with it, wherby eche man seeth.
It is (as old men right well vnderstande)
Ill puttyng a naaht swoorde in a mad mans hande.
She taketh such hert of gras, ꝑ though I maime her,
Or kyll her, yet shall I neuer reclaime her.
She hath (they say) been stiffe necked euermore.
And it is yll healyng of an olde sore.

This

This prouerbe prophecied many yeres agone.
It will not out of the flesshe, thats bred in the bone.
What chaunce haue I, to haue a wife of suche sort,
That will no saute amend: in earnest nor sport?
A small thing amisse late I did espy,
Whiche to make hir mende, by a iest merely,
I sated but this, taunt tyuet wyfe, pour nose drops.
So it mate fall, I will eate no browesse sops
This date. But two dates after this came in vre,
I had sorow to my sops ynough be sure.
Well (q I) it is yll testyng on the soothe.
Soth bourd is no bourd, in ought that mirth dooth.
Such iestes could not iuggle hir, were ought amis.
Nor turne melancoly to mirth. for it is
No playyng with a strawe before an olde cat,
Euery trifling toie age can not laugh at.
Ye mate walke this wate, but sure ye shall tynde,
The further ye go, the further behynde.
Ye should consider, the woman is olde.
And what for a whot worde. Some whot, some colde.
Beare with them, that beare with you. & she is scand,
Not onely the fayrest floure of your garland,
But also she is all the fayre floures therof,
Will ye requite hir than with a tauntyng scof?
Or with any other kynd of vnkyndnesse?
Take hede is a fayre thyng. Beware this blyndnesse.
Why will ye (q he) I shall folow hir will?
To make me Iohn drawlache, or such a snekebill.
To bryng hir solace, that bryngeth me sorow,
Byr lady, than we shall catche byrds to morow.

A good wife maketh a good husbande (they saie)
That (q I) ye maie tourne an other waie.
To make a good husband, make a good wyfe.
I can no more herein, but god stint all strife.
Amen (q he) and god haue mercy brother,
I will now mend this house, and payre an other.
And that he ment of lykelyhod by his owne.
For so apaired he that, er three yeares were growne.
That little and little he decayed so long,
Tyll he at length came to buckle and bare thong.
To discharge charge, that necessarily grewe,
There was no more water than the shyp drewe.
Suche drifres draue he, from yll to wars and wars,
Tyll he was as bare as a birds arse.
Money, and money worthy, did so mysse hym,
That he had not nowe one peny to blysse hym.
Whiche foresene in this woman wisely waiyng,
That meete was to staie somewhat for his staiyng,
To kepe yet one messe for Alyson in store,
She kept one bag, that he had not seue before.
A poore cooke that maie not licke his own fyngers.
But about hir at home now still he lyngers,
Not chequer a boord, all was not clere in the roste,
He looke lyke one that had beshyt the roste.
But whether any secrete tales were sprynklyng,
Or that he by gesse had got an yncklyng
Of hir boord. or that he thought to amend,
And tourne his yll begynnyng to a good ende.
In shewyng hym selfe a newe man, as was seet,
That appered shortly after, but not yeet.

The

The. ix. chapiter.

ONe date in their seruice, which stode so to myne
That I might, and did closely myn eare incline
And likewise cast mine eye to here and see,
What they sated and dyd, where they could not se me.
He vnto hir a goodly tale began,
More lyke a wooer, than a weddyd man,
As feere as matter therof therin serued,
But the first part from wordes of wooyng swerued.
And stod vpon repentance, with submission,
Of his former croked vnkynde condicion.
Prayeng hir, to forgeue and forget all free,
And he forgaue hir, as he forgeuen would bee.
Louyng hir now, as he full depely swore,
As wholly as euer he loued hir before.
Well well (q she) what euer ye now saie,
It is to late to call agayn yesterdate.
Wyse (q he) suche mate my diligence seeme,
That thoffence of yesterdate I mate redeeme.
God taketh me as I am, and not as I was.
Make you me so to, and let all thynges past pas.
I praie the good wife, thinke I speke & thinke playne.
What, he couth fat, that neuer turneth agayne.
Ye be yong ynough to mende, I agree it.
But I am (q she) to olde to see it.
And mende ye or not, I am to old a pere.
What is lyfe? where lyuyng is extinct cleere.
Namely at olde yeres of leaste helpe and most nede.
But no tale coulde tune you, in tyme to take hede.

I

If I tune my ſelfe now (q he) it is kayre.
And hope of true tune, ſhall tune me from diſpayre.
Beleue well, and haue well. men ſaie. ye, ſayed ſhee,
Doo well, and haue well. men ſaie alſo, we ſee.
But what man can beleue, that man can doo well,
Who of no man will conſell take or here tell.
Whiche to you, whan any man any way tryde,
Than were ye deake, ye could not here on that ſyde.
Who euer with you any tyme therin wearis,
He muſt both tell you a tale: and fynde you eares.
You had on your harueſt eares, thicke of hearyng.
But this is a queſtion of olde enquerying,
Who is ſo deaffe, or ſo blynde, as is hee,
That wilfully will nother here nor ſee?
Whan I ſaw your maner, my herte for wo, molte.
Than would ye mend, as the fletcher mends his bolt.
Or as ſowre ale mendth in ſommer, I know,
And knew. which way the wind blewe, and will blow.
Though not to my profite, a prophete was I.
I prophecied this, to true a prophecy.
Whan I was right yll beleued, and worſe hard.
By ſtingyng frō your folkȝ at home, which al mard.
Whan I ſated in ſemblaunce either cold or warme,
A man far from his good, is nye his harme.
Or wylde ye to looke, that ye loſte no more.
On ſuche as ſhewe, that hungry kyes bite ſore.
Than wolde ye loke ouer me, with ſtomacke ſwolne,
Like as the diuell lookt ouer Lincolne.
The diuell is dead wife (q he) for ye ſee,
I looke like a lambe in all your woords to mee.

Looke

Looke as ye list now (q she) thus looke ye than.
And for those lookes I shewe this, to shew eche man,
Suche proffe of this prouerbe, as none is greater,
Which saith, that some man maie steale a hors better
Than some other may stande and looke vpone.
Leude huswiues might haue words. but I not one
That might be alowde. But now yf ye looke,
In mistakyng me, ye maie see, ye rooke
The wrong waie to wood, & the wrong sow by theare.
And therby in the wrong boxe to thriue ye weare,
I haue herd some, to some tell this tale not seelde.
Whan thrift is in the towne, ye be in the feelde.
But contrary, you made that sence to sowne,
Whan thrift was in the feelde, ye were in the towne.
Feelde ware might synke or swym, whille ye had eny.
Towne ware was your ware, to tourne the peny.
But towne or feelde, where moste thrift did appere,
What ye wan in thundred, ye lost in the there.
In all your good husbandry, thus ryd the rocke,
Ye stumbled at a strawe, and lept ouer a blocke.
So many kyndes of encrease you had in choyce,
And nought increase not kepe, how can I reioyce?
Good ridyng at two ancres men haue tolde.
For if the tone faile, the tother maie holde.
But you leaue all anker holde, on seas or lands.
And so set vp shop, vpon Goodwyns sands.
But as folke haue a saiyng bothe olde and trew,
In that they say blacke will take none other hew.
So maie I saie here, to my deepe dolour,
It is a bad clothe that will take no colour.

This case is yours. For ye were neuer so wise,
To take specke of colour, of good aduise.
Thaduise of all frends I saie, one and other
Went in at the tone eare, and out at the tother.
And as those words went out, this prouerbe in came.
He that will not be ruled by his owne dame,
Shall be ruled by his steydame, and so yow.
Hauyng lost your owne good, and owne frends now,
Maie seke your forein frends. if you haue any.
And sure one of my great grefes, among many,
Is that ye haue been so veraie a hog,
To my frends. What man, loue me, loue my dog.
But you to cast precious stones before hogs,
Cast my good before a sort of cur dogs.
And sawte bitches. Whiche by whom now deuoured.
And your honestie amonge theim defloured,
And that ye maie no more expence a foorde,
Nowe can they not afoorde you one good woorde.
And you theim as fewe. And olde folke vnderstod,
Whan theues fall out, true men come to theyr good.
Whiche is not alwaie true. For in all that bretche,
I can no ferthyng of my good the more fetche.
Nor I trow them selues neither, if they wer sworne,
Lyght come lyght go. And sure sens we were borne,
Ruine of one rauin, was there none gretter.
For by your giftes they be as littell the better,
As you be muche the worse. and I cast awaie.
An yll wynde that blowth no man to good, men saie.
Well (q he) euery wind blowth not down the corn.
I hope (I saie) good happe be not all out worn.

I will

I will now begyn thrift, whan thrift semeth gone.
What wife, there be mo waies to the wood than one.
And I will assaie all the waies to the wood,
Tyll I finde one waie, to get againe this good.
Ye will get it agayne (ꝙ she) I feare,
As shortly as a horse will licke his eare.
The Ducheman saieth, that seggyng is good cope.
Good woord; bring not euer of good dedes good hope.
And these words shew your words spoken in scorne.
It pricketh betymes that will be a good thorne.
Tymely crookth the tree, that will a good camok bee.
And such begynnyng such end. we all daie see,
Now you by me at beginnyng beyng thriuen,
And than to kepe thrift could not be prikt nor driuen.
How can ye now get thrift, the stocke beyng gon?
Which is thonely thyng to reyse thrift vpon.
Men saie, he maie yll renne, that can not go,
And your gayne, without your stocke, renneth euen so.
For what is a workeman, without his tooles?
Tales of Robyn hood are good among fooles.
He can yll pype, that lackth his ouer lip.
Who lackth a stocke, his gayne is not worth a chyp.
A tale of a tub, your tale no truth auouth,
Ye speake now, as ye would crepe into my mouth.
In pure peinted processe, as false as faire.
How ye will amend, whan ye can not apayre.
But agaynst gaie glosers, this rude text recites,
It is not all butter, that the coow shites.
I herd ones a wise man saie to his daughter,
Better is the last smile, than the first laughter.

We shall I trust (q he) laugh again at last.
Although I be ones out of the sadle cast.
Yet sens I am bent to syt, this will I doo.
Recouer the hors or lese the saddle too.
Ye neuer could yet (q she) recouer any hap,
To wyn or saue ought, to stop any one gap.
For stoppyng of gaps (q he) care not a rushe.
I will learne to stop two gaps with one bushe,
Ye will (q she) as soone stop gaps with rushes,
As with any husbandly handsome bushes,
Your tales haue lyke tast, where temperance is taster,
To breake my heade, and than geue me a plaster.
Now thrifte is gone, now would ye thriue in all hast.
And whan ye had thrifte, ye had like haste to waste.
Ye lyked than better an ynche of your will,
Than an ell of your thrifte. Wyfe (q he) be still.
Maie I be holpe foorth one ynche at this pynche,
I will yet thriue (I saie) As good is an ynche
As an ell. ye can (q she) make it so, well.
For whan I gaue you an ynche, ye tooke an ell.
Till both ell and ynche be gone, and we in det,
Maie (q he) with a wet finger ye can fet,
As muche as maie easily all this matter ease,
And this debate also pleasauntly appease.
I could doo as muche with an hundred pound now,
As with a thousand afore. I assure yow.
Ye (q she) who had that he hath not, would
Doo that he dooth not, as olde men haue tolde.
Had I, as ye haue, I wolde do more (quoth hee)
Than the preest spake of an sondate, ye should see.

ye

Yedoo, as I haue (q ſhe) for nought I haue,
And nought ye do. What man, I trow ye raue.
Wolde ye bothe eate your cake, and haue your cake?
Ye haue had of me all that I might make.
And bee a man neuer ſo greedy to wyn,
He can haue no more of the fore but the ſkyn.
Well (quoth he) if ye lyſt to bryng it out,
Ye can geue me your vlyſſyng in a clout.
That were for my child, (quoth ſhe) had I ony,
But huſband, I haue neither childe, nor mony.
Ye caſt and conterture this muche lyke in ſhow,
As the blind man caſts his ſtaffe, or ſhootes the crow.
How be it had I money right muche, and ye none,
Yet to be playne, ye ſhulde haue none, for I one.
Nate, he that firſte flattreth me, as ye haue done.
And dooeth as ye dyd to me after, ſo ſoone.
He māie be in my Pater noſter in deede.
But be ſure, he ſhall neuer come in my Creede.
Aue Maria (quoth he) how muche motion
Here is to praiers, with how little deuocion.
But ſome men ſaie, no peny no Pater noſter.
I ſaie to ſuche (ſaid ſhe) no longer foſter,
No longer lemman. But fayre and well than,
Praie and ſhifte eche one for hym ſelfe, as he can.
Euery man for hym ſelfe, and god for vs all.
To thoſe words he ſated nought, but forth wt did fall,
From harpyng on that ſtring, to faire flattring ſpeche
And as I erſt ſated, he did her ſo beſeche,
That thyngs erſt ſo far of, were nowe ſo far on,
That as ſhe maie walow, awaie ſhe is gon,

Where all that was left late with a trustie frende.
Dwellyng a good walke from her at the townes ende.
And backe again streight a haltyng pace she hobles.
Bringyng a bag of royals and nobles.
All that she had, without restraint of one sole.
She brought bullocks noble. for noble or grote,
Had she not one mo. Whiche I after well knew.
And anon smilyng, towarde him as she drew,
A sir, light burdeine far heuy (q she)
This light burdein in long walke welny tireth me.
God geue grace, I plaie not the foole this daie.
For here I send thare after the helue awaie.
But if ye will stint, and auoyde all strife,
Loue and cherishe this as ye would my lyfe.
I will (q he) wyfe, by God almightie.
This geare comth euen in puddyng tyme tightlie.
He snatcht at the bag. No hast but good (q she)
Short shootyng leeseth your game, ye maie see.
Ye myst the cushyn, for all your haste to it.
And I maie set you beside the cushyn pit,
And make ye wype your nose vpon your sleeue,
For ought ye shall wyn without ye axe me leeue.
Haue ye not herde tell, all couet all lese:
A syr, I see, ye may see no greene cheese,
But your teeth muste water. A good cokney coke.
Though ye loue not to bye the pyg in the poke,
Yet snatche ye at the poke, that the pyg is in,
Not for the poke, but the pyg good cheape to wyn.
Lyke one halfe lost, till gredy grasping gat it,
Ye would be ouer the style, er ye come at it.

But

But abyde kend, yur mother byd tyll ye wer borne.
Snatchyng wyuth it not, if ye ſnatche tyll to morne.
Wyen laie (ſaied he) long ſtandyng & ſmall offeryng
Maketh poore perſons. & in ſuch ſignes & proffeyng.
Many praty tales, and merry toys had they,
Before this bag came fully from hir awey.
Kyndly he kyſt her, with words not tart nor tough.
But the cat knowth whoſe lips ſhe lickth wel enough.
Anone, the bag ſhe delyuered hym, and ſaide,
He ſhould beare it, for that it nowe heuy waide.
With good wyll wife. for it is (ſaied he to her)
A proude hors that will not beare his own prouander.
And oft before ſeemed ſhe neuer ſo wyſe,
Yet was ſhe nowe, ſodeinly waxen as nyſe
As it had been a halporth of ſyluer ſpoones.
Thus cloudy mornyngs turne to cleere after noones.
But ſo nye noone it was, that by and by.
They roſe, and went to diner louyngly.

¶ The. x. chapiter.

THis diner thought he long. & ſtreight after that,
To his accuſtomed cuſtomers he gat.
with whō in what time he ſpēt one grote before
In leſſe tyme he ſpendth now, ten grotes or more.
And in ſmall tyme he brought the worlde ſo about,
That he brought the bottom of the bag cleane out.
His dadyng thus agayne made hir yll content,
But ſhe not ſo muche as dreamd that all was ſpent.
Howe be it ſodeinly ſhe mynded on a daie,
To picke the chefe locke, wherin this bag laie,

Determy-

Determinyng this, if it late whole ſtill,
So ſhall it lye, no myte ſhe miniſhe will.
And if the bag began to ſhrinke, ſhe thought beſt,
To take for her parte, ſome part of the reſt.
But ſtreight as ſhe had forthwith opened the locke.
And lookt in the bag, what it was a clocke,
Than was it proued true, as this prouerbe gothe,
He that cometh laſt to the pot, is ſoneſt wrothe.
By her comyng laſte, and to late to the pot.
Whereby ſhe was potted, thus lyke a ſot,
To ſe the pot both ſkymd for renuyng ouer,
And alſo all the licour renne at rouer.
At her good huſbands and her next meetyng,
The diuels good grace might haue geuen a greetyng.
Either for honour or honeſtie as good
As ſhe gaue hym. She was (as they ſay) horne wood.
In no place could ſhe ſitte, her ſelfe to ſettyll.
It ſeemd to hym, ſhe had pyſt on a nettyll.
She nettled him, and he rattled her ſo,
That at end of that fraie, a ſunder they go.
And neuer after came togyther agayne.
He turnd her out at doors, to graſe on the playne.
And him ſelfe went after. For within fortnight,
All that was left, was launched out quight.
And thus had he brought haddock to paddocke.
Till they both were not now worth a haddocke.
It hath ben ſaied, nede maketh the old wyfe trot.
Other folke ſaied it, but ſhe did it God wot.
Firſt from freend to freend, and than from dur to dur,
A beggyng to ſuch that had begged of hur.

But

But as men saie, misery maie be mother,
Where one begger is driuen to beg of an other.
And thus ware, and wasted this most woful wretche.
Tyll death from this life, did her wretchedly fetche,
Her late husbande, and now wydower, here and there
Wandryng about few know, and fewer care where.
Caste out as an abiect, he leadeth his life,
Tyll famine by lyke, set him after his wife.
NOVVE let vs note here, fyrst of the first twaine,
Where they both wedded togyther, to remayne,
Hopyng ioyfull presence shuld weare out all wo.
Yet pouertee brought that ioye to ieofaile, lo.
But notably note these last twayne, where as hee
Tooke her onely, for that he riche would bee.
And she him onely in hope of good happe,
Ja her dotyng dates to be daunst on the lappe.
In condicion they differde so many waies,
That lightly he layde her vp for holy daies.
Her good he layde vp so, lesse theues might spye it:
That nother she coulde, nor he can come by it.
Thus failed all foure, of all thynges lesse and more,
Whiche they all, or any of all, maried fore.

¶ The .xi. chapiter.

FOr sothy (said my frend) this matter maketh bost,
Of diminucion. For here is a myll post
Thwitten to a puddyng pricke so neerely,
That I confesse me discouraged cleerely,
In both my weddyngs, in all thyngs, except one.
This sparke of hope haue I, to procede vpone.

Though

Though these and some other, sorde yll as ye tell,
Yet other haue lyued and loued full well.
If I shuld deny that (q I) I should raue.
For of bothe these sorts, I graunt, that my selfe haue
Sene of the tone sort, and herde of the tother,
That lyked and liued right well, eche with other.
But whether fortune will you, that man declare,
That shall choose in this choice, your comfort or care
Sens, before ye haue chosen, we can not know,
I thought to laie the worst, as ye the best show.
That ye might, beyng yet at libertie,
With all your hope, forgne all your ieoperdie.
And nowe this herde, in these cases on eche parte,
I saie no more, but laie your hand on your harte.
I hartily thanke you (q he) I am sped
Of mine errande. This hitteth the nayle on the hed.
Who that leaueth suretie, and leaueth to chaunce,
Whan fooles pype, by auctoritie he maie daunce.
And sure am I, of those twayne, if I none choose,
Although I nought wyn, yet shall I nought loose.
And to wyn a woman herr, and lose a man,
In all this great winnyng, what gain win I than?
But marke howe foly hath me awaie caried.
Howe lyke a wethercocke haue I here varied.
First these two women to loose I was so lothe,
That if I might, I woulde haue wedded theim bothe.
Than thought I sens, to haue wedded one of theim.
And nowe knowe I clere, I wyll wed none of theim.
They bothe shall haue this one answere by letter,
As good neuer a whit as neuer the better.

Now

NOVVE let me axe (q I) and your ſelf anſwere,
The ſhort queſtion, that I aſked while ere.
A foule olde ryche widowe, whether wed would ye,
Or a poung fayre maide, beyng poore as ye be.
In neither barrell better hearyng (q hee)
I lyke thus, richeſſe as pli as pouertee.
Who that hath either of theſe pygs in vre,
He hath a pyg of the worſe panyer ſure.
I was wedded vnto my wyll. How be it,
I will be deuorſt, and be wedde to my wyt.
Whereby with theſe examples paſte, I maie ſee,
Fonde weddyng, for loue, or good ouely, to flee.
Onely for loue, or ouely for good,
Or onely for both I wedde not, by my hood.
Thus no one thyng ouely, though one thyng chiefly
Shall woo me to wed now: for nowe I eſpy,
Although the chiefe one thyng in weddyng be loue,
Yet muſt mo thyng\ ioygne, as all in one may moue,
Suche kynde of liuyng, for ſuche kynde of life,
As lackyng the ſame, no lacke to lacke a wyfe.
Here is enough, I am ſatisfied (ſaide he.)
Sens enough is enough (ſaide I) here maie we,
With that one word take end good, as maie be geaſt.
For folke ſaie, enough is as good as a feaſt.

FINIS.

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